The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor concerning it to the industrial, business and political fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WE PLEDGE—
1 MILLION DOLLARS
IN
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1717 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, MARCH 7, 1944 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 34, NO. 10

FACING *the* FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

Senator Harry S. Truman and his colleagues serving on the Senate Committee Investigating the National Defense Program have done a masterful job in their third annual report.

With all the facts and figures at their command, these Senators weighed American labor's war record and found it good. In fact, they somewhat pointedly remarked that labor's record has been better than that of many of its critics.

Results count. And the Truman Committee emphasizes the obvious truth that through the efforts of American workers, our country has succeeded in winning the major battles of production. The mildest term which the report uses to describe production is "awe-inspiring."

Now remember it is not the function of a Senatorial Investigating Committee to hand out pats on the back. Ordinarily, such committees, after probing into every detail of their inquiry, come up with scathing exposure. Therefore, the high praise accorded to labor in the report is doubly significant. If labor had fallen down on its job, the committee would not have hesitated to heap coals of fire on its head.

A Marine Speaks Out

Thus the Truman Committee report shows up the constant barrage of anti-labor propaganda as hooey. The truth is that such authoritative reports come only once a year. The other 364 days the newspapers and the radio are crammed with sensational "strike" stories and other similarly unbalanced and vicariously biased stories.

There is no dodging the fact that such stories have served to alienate the American people—and especially many of the boys in the armed forces—from labor. The cumulative effect of the anti-labor smears cannot be overemphasized. It is damaging in the extreme.

Consider, for instance, the remarks made in a radio interview by Marine Sgt. John R. Devereux, just returned from 22 months in the Pacific. This young man, who is a nephew of Col. James P. S. Devereux, commander of the Marines in the historic defense of Wake Island, said:

"I had the impression that the whole country was tied up by strikes."

The young Marine's astonishment that production is running full blast on the home front was followed by indignation over the lies fed to him and his fellows on the fighting fronts.

These fighting men don't want sympathy, he said. They want "more and straighter news."

It's too bad that all the boys in uniform whose morale has been shaken by false scare stories on the strike situation can't get "more and straighter news." Certainly labor would like to see that they get it.

How Labor's Hands Are Tied

But labor's hands are tied. Government red tape prevents labor organizations from telling their side of the story direct to the men in the armed forces. Many reactionary and anti-labor publications are permitted to publish overseas editions for distribution to our soldiers and sailors, but labor publications cannot be so distributed because of military regulations and because priorities for paper are denied them.

At the same time, the Government's own publications have failed dismally to provide "more and straighter news" for the men in the armed forces. They have failed to present the true war production picture in its proper perspective. Not a single one of the Army or Navy publications which we have examined has dared to come out with a forthright statement on war production as the Truman report, despite the fact that the minds of our soldiers and sailors are being poisoned against labor by the commercial press and radio.

Many of our well-meaning friends ask us from time to time why labor doesn't do all it remarkable war story to the public. These friends don't understand the combination labor is up against—a combination which controls every medium of public expression and uses these media to promote its venomous fight against labor.

Then, too, self-praise is not effective. What labor says about itself is bound to be discounted when so many louder voices contradict labor's story. In a situation like this, it becomes the duty of the Government to inform its citizens of the truth. The Truman Committee has done this—honestly and fearlessly. Surely it is not too much to expect the Executive Branch of the government to uphold and proclaim the plain facts presented by the Truman Committee so that the American people can have "more and straighter news" on the war effort.

Widespread Frauds Bolster Move To Change N. Y. Compensation Law

Albany, N. Y.—A comprehensive program of legislation designed to improve administration of the State Workmen's Compensation Law and eliminate blackjacks and other abuses which have developed through the years, particularly in New York City, of many millions of dollars; improvement of the machinery of the Division of Workmen's Compensation of the Department of Labor, with special reference to the operation of its medical bureau; protection of the rights and interests of injured workmen, including both as regards medical treatment and facility of payments; strengthening of the efficiency of the State Insurance Fund, and improvement of other phases affecting the honest and efficient administration of workmen's compensation.

More than a dozen bills covering the many recommendations, it was learned, are being prepared for introduction at this session of the legislature.

These numerous recommendations contained in the report deal with elimination of the right of licensed compensation representatives, doctors and lawyers who, the report charges, have defrauded thinks and widely exploited sharks, particularly in New York City, of many millions of dollars; improvement of the machinery of the Division of Workmen's Compensation of the Department of Labor, with special reference to the operation of its medical bureau; protection of the rights and interests of injured workmen, including both as regards medical treatment and facility of payments; strengthening of the efficiency of the State Insurance Fund, and improvement of other phases affecting the honest and efficient administration of workmen's compensation.

AFL Human Rights League Donates $400,000 For India Famine Relief

New York City.—An immediate relief program for the people in India still suffering from the after-effects of famine, has been set in motion by American organized labor in cooperation with the India Famine Relief Society and the British War Relief Society, according to an announcement by Matthew Woll, president of the Labor League for Human Rights, official relief arm of the American Federation of Labor.

A total of $400,000, of which $190,000 is a special allocation by organized labor from its contributions to the National War Fund, has been appropriated for the first four months of 1944. Additional funds are to be requested later in the year to provide for continuation of the relief program.

Only quarter of the fund has already been spent for the purchase of 9 evaporated milk, which was shipped to India during January, with the balance of $300,000 is to be expended during March and April to suit the needs of the suffering people and the availability of supplies.

Administration of the relief fund has been undertaken by the American Friends Service Committee, which will not only supervise distribution of supplies from its contributions to the National War Fund, but has appropriated for the first four months of 1944 $100,000 for the purchase of further Indian needs that can be met by American help.

MEAT INSPECTORS LOW PAY HELD FOOD SUPPLY MENACE

Washington, D. C.—President James B. Burns of the American Federation of Government Employees asserted that the safety of America's food supplies may be seriously menaced if inadequate pay scales prevail to maintain the standards of the meat inspection force.

"Your employee," he said, "are patriotically doing their best under extremely trying conditions, but many have gone into military service, the work has increased in volume, and it is almost impossible to find replacements in the ranks because of the low salary scales paid qualified men—$1620 base pay for lay inspectors and $2600 for veterinarians.

"The Department of Agriculture has studied the situation thoroughly and has come to the conclusion that reclassification of salaries of lay inspectors and veterinarians is essential. The conclusion of the Department has been approved by the Civil Service Commission and the Bureau of the Budget.

"Adequate meat inspection affects everyone, and no time should be lost in remedying the present unfortunate situation."

A proposal is pending before the subcommittee on Department of Agriculture appropriations asking for the reclassification of lay inspectors and veterinarians, in accordance with the views of the Department, and the American Federation of Government Employes is strongly supporting it.

Strict Non-Partisan Political Policy Must Be AFL Course, Green Insists

Orders Affiliates Not To Collaborate With CIO Political Committee

Washington, D. C.—Acting upon instructions of the executive council of the American Federation of Labor, William Green, AFL president, addressed a circular to all affiliated unions of the federation, calling upon them to give no aid or cooperation to the Political Action Committee of the CIO, headed by Sidney Hillman.

Mr. Green declared in the circular that in the coming national campaign the AFL, headed by Sidney Hillman, would pursue its traditional non-partisan policy of supporting friends and opposing enemies seeking office, and that "under no circumstances" should unions affiliated with the federation collaborate with the CIO Political Action Committee.

In his letter, Mr. Green said:

"The executive council directs that all affiliated unions carry out their non-partisan political policy free from association with or obligations to other organizations. The council directs that under no circumstances must state federations of labor or central labor unions or our directly affiliated unions collaborate with representatives of dual organizations, or allow the representatives of dual organizations to participate in formation and execution of the non-partisan political policy of the American Federation of Labor.

"We cannot compromise in this matter. We cannot allow the prestige and standing of the American Federation of Labor to be undermined by the dual rival, rebel movements. The only way to have unity in the house of labor is through a return to the house of labor by the dual rebel, rival movements. When this step is taken they can then participate in the formation of American Federation of Labor policies, but until they do so cannot concede that any unit of a dual movement can participate in the formulation of American Federation of Labor political policies."

Mr. Green also called upon affiliates of the AFL that have been or are collaborating with the CIO Political Action Committee "to cease and desist immediately."

"I repeat again," he added, "maintain the prestige, the traditions and the vital principles and policies of the American Federation of Labor, which call for the formation of our non-partisan political policies, free from collaboration or consultation with rebel, dual, rival labor movements."

Mr. Green concluded by requesting all AFL affiliates to comply with the instructions of the executive council, "both in spirit and in letter."

Seven Women War Workers Honored At Labor-Management Exposition

Washington, D. C.—Seven women war workers from plants in the East and Far West were feted in Washington as a feature of Woman's Day at the First National Labor-Management Production Exposition, sponsored by the War Production Board.

The women war workers included the nation's two welding queens, the six-gun-toting sheriff of Los Angeles, the treasurer of the first war plant Grandmothers' Club, a mother with two sons in the fighting services, a woman member of a labor-management committee, and one voted the ideal worker by her associates.

The visiting war workers were received at the Labor-Management Exposition in the Department of Commerce Auditorium in the forenoon by representatives of the women's auxiliaries of the armed forces. The Women's National Press Club gave a luncheon at the Willard at which many distinguished guests greeted the representatives of women in war industry. In the afternoon they were received at the White House.

Mrs. John Boettiger, daughter of the President, received the group at the White House. The delegation of women war workers consisted of the following:

Miss Cora Lee Clountz, Kaiser Shipyards, Richmond, Calif.
Mrs. Edna Slocum, Moore Drydock Co., Oakland, Calif.
Miss Mary Shade, White River Lumber Co., Enumclaw, Wash.
Mrs. Elizabeth Kemp, Textile Metal Hose Co., Newark, N. J.
Mrs. Anne Maurer, General Instrument Corp., Elizabeth, N. J.
Mrs. Ruby Gardner, Manning, Maxwell & Moore, Inc., Bridgeport, Conn.
Miss Anna Welbe, Dayton Manufacturing Co., Minneapolis, Minn.

Miss Clountz and Mrs. Slocum, the welding queens from California, were contestants in a match on the Pacific Coast which was called the "welder-to-blood" duel. Employed at the losing yard had agreed to give the winning yard 1,000 pints of blood. Mrs. Slocum scored a few more points than Miss Clountz. But the workers at Moore Drydock, encouraged by the indomitable Mrs. Slocum herself, said they would match the Kaiser yard pint for pint nevertheless.

Mrs. Slocum has two sons, aged 11 and 13. Her trip was financed by the AFL Metal Trades Council. Miss Clountz, 20, was a stenographer before she went in for welding. Later representative at the Kaiser plant is also the AFL Metal Trades Council.

Industrial Teamwork Helps Win War, Labor-Management Exposition Shows

Washington, D. C.—Contributions which Labor-Management War Production Drive Committees are making toward winning the war by increasing, improving and accelerating the output of war weapons and equipment for the fighting forces were realistically displayed at the first National Labor-Management Exposition, held Feb. 29 through March 11.

It was the first time that the American people had a chance to get an insight into the industrial teamwork that is operating government plant in the nation's vast production achievements, and thousands of visitors, including officials of the government, members of Congress, representatives of the foreign diplomatic corps, officers of the Army and Navy, and leaders of labor and industry, inspected the exhibits which filled the main auditorium and overflowed into the adjoining corridors and lobby of the Department of Commerce Building.

The visitors saw 86 exhibits, including 73 portraying in original and vivid forms the activities of L-M Committees in 1079 industrial war plants. There were also exhibits by two L-M councils, composed of 49 committees, and by 12 operating government agencies. Conspicuously displayed were special exhibits drawn from the 171 committees from coast to coast.

Symbolizing the determination of labor and management to battle the attack by producing "20 per cent more for '44," the exhibits depicted all phases of committee activities. Suggestion systems to encourage workers to submit ideas for speeding plant operations were prominent among the exhibits, and several workers who had won national honors were present to explain their devices.

At the same time the OWI announced that impressive results have been achieved by the war workers' suggestion plan for increasing industrial production. The report was based on figures compiled by the War Production Board, the War Manpower Commission, the U. S. Maritime Commission, the Navy Department and the War Department.

NOTICE TO LABOR EDITORS

In connection with the First National Labor - Management Production Exposition being held in Washington, a packet of mats showing pictures of the exhibit and government, labor and industry leaders in attendance, is available to labor editors on request to Mr. Herman Wolf, Information Chief, War Production Drive, WPB, Wash. 25, D. C.

Since June, 1942, the number of local labor-management committees had risen from 2,200 to more than 4,000. About 4,500,000 workers are now engaged under the plans. Committees are especially numerous in shipbuilding, aircraft, aircraft, iron and steel, engines. Together, these industries account for more than 4,000,000 of the 6,500,000 workers.

In the last six months the volume of useful ideas in the nation's suggestion boxes has tripled, the OWI said.

WAR DEPT. SAVES MILLIONS FROM WAR WORKERS' IDEAS

Washington, D. C.—Suggestions from war workers for speeding victory have brought an estimated saving of $6,000,345 to the War Department, according to the latest tabulated results of the "Ideas for Victory" program.

Between Aug. 1, 1943, when the program went into operation, and the end of December, 47,708 suggestions were received from civilian employees, of which 2,676 were adopted. Cash paid as awards for these suggestions totaled $53,945.

Truman Report Repudiates Proposals For Labor Draft

Highlights of Truman Report

Washington, D. C.—By accident or design, the daily press overlooked or ignored the great tribute to American labor's record in this war which was contained in the 200-page third annual report of the Senate's Truman Committee, which is charged with the duty of investigating the war program on the home front.

Because this report is authoritative and because it shows up the widely circulated attacks on labor's record as false propaganda, the following excerpts from the Senate Committee's findings are of utmost importance:

To fulfill the government's huge production needs, the report says, "our workers engaged in manufacturing, mining, and agriculture contributed nearly 45 per cent more man-days of work in 1943 than in 1939, despite the fact that more than 10,000,000 men have withdrawn from the labor pool for the armed forces. In manufacturing alone, our workmen contributed 89.6 per cent more man-days in 1943 than in 1939.

"This astounding performance exceeds anything of its kind ever achieved in the history of the world. The results obtained are the best answer to the critics of the home front. They do not indicate perfection, but they do evidence accomplishment of a high order.

"All Americans who have participated can be justly proud, because the success is due to the accumulated efforts of the millions of people who have each done their share rather than to any miraculous planning of a few experts at the top.

"Women in particular deserve credit for filling the huge gap created by the manpower requirements of the armed services. Older men who had retired from active work have returned to their jobs, and because of their experience are among the most valuable of workers.

"The job that has been done not only assures that victory will be won, but it assures that it will be won more quickly and with fewer casualties. Our armed forces have more and better equipment than our foes."

"Unquestionably there have been excesses which are subject to the severest condemnation. However, we must not allow those excesses to obscure the fact that, on the whole, the performance by labor has been very good.

"The difference between man-days lost at our rate of strikes and man-days lost at the English rate of strikes when compared to total man-days worked in the United States, is only 0.025 per cent."

"Strikes receive a very great amount of attention in the press because of their dramatic and spectacular news value, and because the public properly resents these violations of labor's pledge not to obstruct the war effort by striking. However, strikes in mining, manufacturing and construction in 1943 resulted in a loss of manpower of less than one-fourth of 1 per cent of the manpower actually used, whereas the manpower contributed by labor in that period exceeded that used in 1939 by 76 per cent.

"Recognition must be given to the difficulty of labor's present position. National issues such as higher wages, better working conditions, and shorter hours, run counter to our needs, and for the most part labor has given up voluntarily its principal weapons for enforcing its rights. Many of the critics of labor have not done as much.

"The situation has been made more difficult by the division of labor into groups hostile to each other, and by the action of a few selfish leaders, whose success has embarrassed other no less able leaders, who have refrained from asserting demands at the point of a pistol in the hour of the country's greatest emergency."

Emphasizing the big profits industry has been making during the war, the Committee report includes a study of the 100 biggest war contractors comparing their 1942 profits with their pre-war profits. Only one of the 100 failed to show increases over 1942 from excess profits. Profits for 1943 are much higher than in 1942, so the story probably is even worse for 1943.

The Committee finds that some of the 100 big war contractors had profits before taxes of 100 times their pre-war level.

Workers Given Credit For "Awe-Inspiring" War Output

Washington, D. C.—In the most authoritative and impartial report on the war production program yet presented, the Senate's Truman Committee came out unreservedly against a National Service Law to draft labor.

Outstanding findings of the committee report were:

1—The major battles of war production have been won, largely through the "astounding performance" of American labor.

2—Proposals for a National Service Act are far too drastic, unwieldy of operation and ineffective as an anti-strike measure.

3—Government and management must take their share of responsibility for strikes which have occurred. The committee did not condone strikes but declared America's strike record compares favorably with that of Great Britain where compulsory National Service legislation has been in effect.

4—The Government should adopt a clear and understandable labor relations policy for the duration, written into law and administered by a single central agency, instead of the multiple bureaus now handling labor matters.

These conclusions, fully endorsing the official policy of the American Federation of Labor, were buttressed by an indisputable array of facts and figures obtained by the Truman Committee from Government sources.

In support of its finding that the major battles of war production have been won, the committee cited these production totals from January, 1941, to this year:

Delivery of 153,061 airplanes of all types; 746 combat naval vessels; 1,899 Liberty ships; 702 commercial ships; 8,288 subsidiary naval vessels, mostly landing craft; 1,567,940 military trucks—all this besides equipping ten million men with guns, tanks, clothing, ammunition, etc.

While need for landing craft, heavier and longer range aircraft, radio and radar, ships and other special items will continue many months, the committee expressed confidence that the nation's war production facilities will be able to meet all requirements.

Manpower shortages are still a problem, the committee conceded, but it laid the blame largely on hoarding of labor reserves by industry. It urged the efficient use of manpower should figure in costs when the Government determines profits through renegotiation of contracts.

Immediate production of more consumer goods from surplus war materials, where possible, was recommended by the committee as a measure to shorten the long interval between conversion from war to peace production.

Terming America's war production "awe-inspiring," the committee pointed out that "this astounding performance exceeds anything of its kind ever achieved in the history of the world."

To figures on production cited above, the committee added the housing and training facilities for 10 million men and the construction of airfields and bases all over the world.

The record was increased by the construction of nearly 20 billion dollars worth of the "best and most modern plant facilities in the world."

These plants should not be presented as a gift to their operators, the committee held, but neither should "reputable industry be protected against competition of Government built plants acquired at a fair price."

"The question as to whether Government-built plants are to be closed must be decided squarely upon the issue as to whether it is proposed that the United States return to a peacetime economy similar to that which existed in 1939, when nine million workers were unemployed in addition to upward of five million women and other war workers who were not seeking employment—in 1939, or whether we propose to provide full employment for all who seek it by operating our plants whether owned by the Government or privately, and if necessary, by encouraging the construction of additional plant facilities."

ILO CONFERENCE TO OPEN IN PHILADELPHIA APR. 20

Montreal, Can.—Edward J. Phelan, Acting Director of the International Labor Office, announced that the 26th regular session of the International Labor Conference opening April 20 would be held at Temple University in Philadelphia.

The Conference will last three to four weeks, and at least 40 of the member states of the International Labor Organization are expected to be represented.

Among the chief items on the agenda is that calling upon the Conference to recommend "present and post-war social policy" to the United Nations.

American Legion Urged To Reduce Food Wastage To Aid War Effort

The American Legion has been challenged by its own members to mobilize the Legion's influence to reduce food wastage, which is held to be a much larger cause of time lost than strikes.

In a telegram to Warren Atherton, national commander of the American Legion, Irvin R. Kuenzli, legislative chairman, National Conference of Union Labor Legionnaires and secretary-treasurer of the American Federation of Teachers, said:

"National War Food Administrator Marvin Jones has just issued an amazing statement that one-fifth of the entire food supply in the United States is wasted and therefore two hours out of every ten worked by agricultural workers are lost.

"This means that more than six hundred million man days are lost annually through wastage of food. This number is three hundred times the man days lost by strikes in 1943.

"Food wastage therefore is equivalent to having two million men on strike during the entire year. Time lost through food wastage in a single day is more than the same as time lost by strikes in a year.

"Suggest therefore that American Legion launch national campaign immediately to reduce this serious handicap to the war effort. A reduction of food wastage by only one per cent would save more than three times the days lost through all strikes in 1943."

FURUSETH'S NINETIETH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

New York, N. Y.—The ninetieth birthday anniversary of the late Andrew Furuseth, father of the LaFollette Seamen's Act, passed by Congress in 1915 and signed by President Woodrow Wilson, will be celebrated on March 12 by the Friends of Andrew Furuseth Legislative Association, according to an announcement by Silas Blake Axtell, counsel and one of the founders of the association.

Mr. Furuseth, frequently called the Abraham Lincoln of the sea, died in Washington, D. C., January 28, 1938. His body laid in state in the rotunda of the Department of Labor Building, an honor accorded to no other labor leader in America.

NEW YORK ILGWU LOCALS DEFEAT ALL COMMUNISTS

New York City.—With election returns from three-quarters of the 20 ILGWU locals in New York representing more than 100,000 members, already in, David Dubinsky, president of the union, announced that not a single Communist has been elected to any local office as business agent, executive board member or convention delegate.

"This is the cleanest mop-up of Communist influence in this union in the past twenty years," Mr. Dubinsky declared, "and a decisive victory for progressive trade unionism. Our members refused to become confused by Communist schemes to smuggle in their candidates on bogus issues which have nothing whatever to do with the economics of our industry. Our members have likewise declined to listen to the siren voice of 'partnership' with Communists and to their sweet invitations of 'unity.'"